

# Eco-Sense

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The Allergy and Environmental Health  
Association of Canada

Association allergies, santé et  
environnement du Canada

Ottawa Branch



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The editor reserves the right to use or make changes to your contribution.

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# President's Corner

*Ask not what AEHA can do for you. Ask what you can do for yourself by working with other members.*

We've come a long way! More and more authorities are getting past their skepticism about providing services to people with sensitivities. Even the Canadian Medical Association has stopped actively promoting abuse. The CMA now seems to be trying to reduce physicians' potential liability for damages. Perhaps, in a few years, the tardy actions of the CMA will encourage hostile physicians to stop abusing people, and start observing their most basic maxim-- "First, do no harm".

In the area of medical education, the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges has offered to help distribute information to physicians-in-training. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has suggested that its members learn more about what's happening for us at Women's College Hospital in Toronto. It is a great time to make progress, if you feel it's needed.

All people with sensitivities can help move things forward...even just by observing the following points when talking to others:

1) Sensitivities and multiple sensitivities are not new. They have been experienced for generations.

2) Sensitivities and multiple sensitivities are not caused by a single disease entity, but by many different diseases involving quite different etiologies or causes. They are not necessarily caused by allergy. They do not necessarily involve the immune system. They are not necessarily caused by modern chemicals. (Castles were mouldy. Caves were mouldy.)

3) Organized medicine has known about sensitivities other than simple allergy for more than a century. Multiple sensitivities, food intolerances, and so on, are NOT new to medicine, despite what some ignorant people might tell you.

4) We must separate the issue of respect for the dignity of the individual and their experience from the medical theories explaining various kinds of sensitivities. As leadership in the CMA has stated: "confusing individuals with health problems with therapies used to address them is counter-productive and leads neither to a better understanding of complex

problems nor of better care for individuals".

5) No one medical approach is appropriate for all or even most people with sensitivities. As the CMA has stated "there are many physicians who are acutely aware of the problems of environmental sensitivities and have expertise in this area and are addressing the needs of patients with sensitivities".

Don't knock it when opportunity knocks

What the advances mean is that there are tremendous opportunities for progress in many institutions and agencies. The best return on effort occurs when the ball is already rolling. Another advantage is that action is a lot less stressful than it used to be. Now there are so many positive opportunities we can't keep up. With more opportunities, it is important to establish a broader base of involvement so in AEHA (Ottawa) we are bringing together people who have concerns in common, so that members can work together to move things forward.

Working together has some important advantages over individual action. The positions we put forward are more broadly-based. When consumers work together, the approach to authorities is more consistent than when we work in isolation. We can avoid repeating past mistakes, as some neophyte activists seem hell-bent on doing. So, while executive members have done a lot of the lobbying, now we want to spend our time helping members represent their concerns.

Some of the areas Ottawa members are working on include:

## Healing

New members, in fact all members identify that healing is an important part of their reason for involvement. Things to try. People to work with. Information, from local sources of organic food to protecting yourself from electromagnetic fields, or communicating with people who have attitude problems. New members and old-timers want to learn from those who have been able to achieve substantial improvement, or who have successfully adapted their environment to their disability. People want access to helpful therapies, to health care in general. Attitudes

—cont. on page 4

## AEHA POTLUCK

Saturday, July 26 @ 5:30 pm

Anne and George Buckingham have graciously offered to host the summer potluck.

25 Costello Ave. Nepean  
If you require directions phone 829-0883.

Please bring a dish of food to share (well-labelled,) a serving utensil, your plate, glass and utensils, and your appetite!

### President's message--cont.

in the medical community. Health planning. Organic farming. Medical facilities. There are several agencies in Ottawa who are ready to listen.

#### Workplace

Many AEHA members have expressed concern about disability prevention and accommodation, workers compensation, sick leave, disability provisions of the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans, private insurers, rehabilitation, alternate employment, attitudes, management policies, and scent policies. Largely due to the work of member Anne McCallum, several parts of the public service are learning more about how to accommodate us. Several departments have set up committees to begin addressing this concern.

#### Social Services

Sometimes people with sensitivities are disabled to the extent of being unable to work. For these members, concerns include access to services, corporate knowledge base, worker awareness, policy concerning "reasonable accommodation", benefits, diet supplements, housing needs, employment, home care, workshop alternatives, and worker attitudes. Often people with very severe sensitivities are in isolated, low population areas where there are few welfare workers and it is hard to change workers if you have one who has an attitude problem.

#### Transportation

Should we have a scent free OC TRANSPOT? Or ParaTranspo for the environmentally sensitive? Other

issues include the accessibility of railway cars, aircraft, intercity buses, and the presence of perfume in all these public areas.

#### Education

Are your children being accommodated in school? Is there a need for increased awareness in school boards? How can AEHA bring members together so that we can help each other sustain progress in this area?

#### Organizational development

Of course, there is still the important job of maintaining our organization. In the last issue of *Eco-Sense* there was a list of jobs that are going begging. You don't have to fully commit to taking over a job to help out. Some of the important areas are membership, networking, fundraising, library resources, and going to public events to set up a table and distribute information. It is important for members to start phoning their executive when they want to work with others to help themselves, and not just when they want someone to help them.

There are many opportunities. Don't just sit there stewing about your own frustrations; work with others to get past them. We have achieved a great amount of credibility and acceptance. Let's take advantage of it!

Chris Brown, AEHA Ottawa Branch, President <>

# Letters

Dear editor,

In Winter/Spring issue of *Eco-Sense*, Leslirae Rotor lamented on the absence of a succinct book on "how to recover" to refer people who are at loss. The recently published book "The Rebellious Body: Reclaim Your Life From Environmental Illness Or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome", by Janice Strubbe Wittenberg might be the one. Janice Wittenberg's own experiences with environmental illness and chronic fatigue syndrome prompted her to write the book she had been looking for: a survey of theories about EI and CFS and a wide range of treatment possibilities and coping techniques. There are numerous examples of real life stories and a list of recommended reading.

But the recent article by Judith Spence in ALIVE magazine on the difficult task of uncovering environmental illness and my own experience made me more aware about irreversible changes due to the unfamiliarity of a majority doctors with EI/MCS. At the beginning when you are overwhelmed with debilitating symptoms, you can't think clearly or read; when you haven't heard yet about environmental illness and keep going to different doctors who do not have a clue what it is and actually cause more damage

than help. The books are very helpful after you have been diagnosed and started to get out of the initial purgatory.

This is why, I think, AEHA as the official body should lobby the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario to implement mandatory courses of professional development on basic symptomology of EI/MCS for all M.Ds as it is not taught at Canadian Universities. Maybe we can create a file with descriptions of symptoms, so when the next victim of EI will come to his family doctor and complain that he/she has a shortness of breath or nausea when trying to take a bus, the answer will not be: you are just hyperventilating. Or when you have been sent to a neurosurgeon with the ct scan results of lesions in the brain and numbness in arms and legs, he will not say to you, "I'm a main stream doctor and do not have a clue what it is".

Medical professionals need to read our stories to be convinced of the urgency of developing an educational and research program on EI/MCS.

Tatiana Schneider <>

## Community Access and Integration

This summer, representatives of the Ottawa-Carleton Social Planning Council, the Ottawa-Carleton Regional District Health Council, and the Health Department of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton will be visiting with people with sensitivities, learning about our experience, and reporting back to their agencies and to the general public next fall. It is important that they hear about some of the serious issues we face, particularly those where people have been hurt needlessly, or where changes would result in greater independence, fewer restrictions, reduced disability, and better health protection.

If you're affected, it's important to speak up! If you've gone through things you'd hate to see other

people go through, if you have some ideas about potential solutions to problems, let us know, and we'll try to get you a spot before this group. They will be going to several places to listen to people, including private homes, so that we will have a better chance that the more seriously affected people will be able to tolerate the physical location. If you want to talk to these reps, to make sure your concerns and suggestions are known about, give a call to the AEHA Ottawa phone line, at 860-AEHA, and leave your name and number, and a brief description of the kinds of issues you'd like them to know about. (There is a longer description of this process in the last *Eco-Sense*.)

Chris Brown <>

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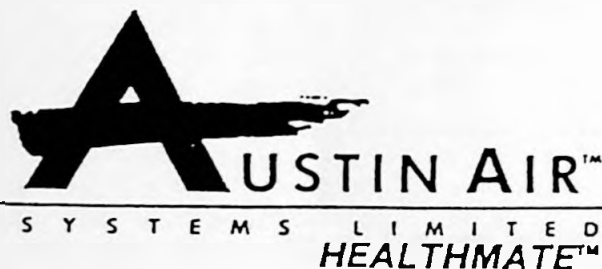
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# Treat a Cough the Chinese Way

The cough reflex expels air and secretions from the lungs with a sudden explosive noise, which is an essential protective response to clear the lungs, bronchi, or trachea of irritants and secretions. Chronic cough commonly indicates underlying problems. Chronic coughing may be indicative of tuberculosis, lung cancer, bronchiectasis, bronchitis, otitis media, subdiaphragmatic irritation, congestive heart failure, and mitral valve disease. However, most chronic coughs are caused by the common cold, flu, or allergies.

There were some clients in my clinic who were suffering from the chronic cough for months and years and were treated with an antihistamine, a decongestant, and an analgesic (painkiller) before coming to my clinic. The drugs caused side effects such as drowsiness and dizziness, but the chronic cough still existed day and night. Traditional Chinese therapies were employed to treat the chronic cough with good results. The chronic cough finally disappeared. The principle for the treatment are introduced as follows.

## Etiology and clinical manifestation

The causative factors for a chronic cough are exogenous or endogenous. The exogenous pathogenic factors can be divided into two types. One is Wind-cold type: Chills with fever, choking cough, headache, nasal obstruction, thin white tongue coating and superficial pulse. The other is Wind-heat type: Chills without fever, thirst, cough with thick

sputum, yellow tongue coating and rapid pulse. The endogenous factors also can be divided into two types. One is deficiency of lung-yin: dry cough, sore throat, afternoon fever, malar flush, red tongue with thin coatings feeble rapid pulse. The other is deficiency of spleen-yang: cough with excessive sputum, anorexia, thick white-coated tongue, deep and slow pulse.

## Treatment

With the cough caused by the exogenous factors, acupuncture and moxibustion on specific channels (lung and large intestine) are selected to activate the dispersing function of the lung and to relieve the exterior symptoms.

With the cough caused by the endogenous factors, acupuncture and moxibustion on specific channels (Lung, spleen, kidney, and Ren) are selected to tonify the lung-yin and to strengthen the spleen-yang.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (613) 234-3767, Shi Ji-Ling <>



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# Research Material Needed!!!

I'm a 36-year old, living with environmental allergies for the past 15 years. I've tried different treatments with little results gained. In the past four years I've done personal research regarding hormones, "Our Bodies Make Many Different Hormones". Some are well-known, others are not very well-known. By doing this investigation, I found a big relation between the lack of certain hormones and my condition. When I started replacing those hormones, my health improved quite a bit.

Now there are other hormones I'm doing research on and the medical field is giving me a hard time just to be tested for those hormones, even if the clues are there indicating the lack of the hormones. I'm looking for people interested in sharing information about their experiences with hormones. There is a great potential, but doctors just don't test their patients for this. I'll appreciate all comments and suggestions and if you have been tested, I would like to hear from you to see if your health is being affected by the lack of different hormones. Just to mention a few, there is the DHEA, growth hormone, cortisol plus many more. I will reply to all the correspondence received.

My address is: Donald Barbarie, 20 Mathew Street, Rockland, Ontario, K4K 1K7 <>

## A Chinook In Your Home

by Paul Battle

Warm winds, melting snow, and a respite from the trials of winter living. That is the image most Canadians have of the Chinook winds in the western provinces. While in Canada they are mostly seen as being a blessing, in other parts of the world they are not.

In many areas of the world these winds have been documented as increasing the number of automobile accidents, elevating the suicide rate, decreasing the success rate of medical operations, and have been labelled as "Evil Winds". Examples would be the Mistral wind of France, the Föhn in Germany, the Sharav of the middle east and the Santa Ana winds of California.

When these winds are blowing the natural balance of small air ions is disrupted with the negative ions losing their charge and a surplus of positive ions being generated.

This imbalance brings unpleasant feelings of tension, irritability, depression, and even physical disorders.

### What's an air Ion?

Ions are positive and negative electrically charged molecules. Outdoors in a natural setting the air contains from 1,000 to 2,000 ions per cubic centimetres, in a ratio of 5 positive to 4 negative. This natural balance gives a feeling of well-being and is the density and ratio that we have evolved with as a species.

In nature the ion balance can be upset by the previously mentioned 'Evil Winds' or by the conditions present just prior to a thunder storm. Have you ever felt the tension and heaviness of the air prior to a thunderstorm and the contrasting lightness almost effervescence of the air after the storm has past. What you are feeling after a storm is the effects of the excess negative ions generated by the discharge of lightning and falling precipitation.

### Positive Ions In Your Home

Inside a home or office building the beneficial negative ions are depleted by electrical fields from TV's and computer monitors, metal ducts, static from synthetic fabrics, and particularly by smoky and polluted, dusty, or dry air.

In an indoor urban environment, the ion count can be as low as 100 per cm<sup>2</sup> with an imbalance of positive

ions. What we are creating is that heavy depressing atmosphere similar to the conditions prior to a thunderstorm. While we do not have much control often over our working environments, we do have control over the environmental conditions in our own homes.

As with other aspects of Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) issues, source control should be the first method used to improve the conditions. Positive ions are generated by direct friction or air friction over synthetic materials. Again, another case where we need to be removing that offending synthetic wall-to-wall broadloom.

### "Enlightened Spaces"

Much of your time and resources may be dedicated to various spiritual practices or healing endeavours. It is important to remember that the spiritual, physical, and emotional bodies are all interconnected. An indoor climate with excessive positive ions will effect not only your moods and well-being but your receptiveness to the subtle energies as well.

Rooms that we dedicate to healing, spiritual practices, and rejuvenation should be considered "Enlightened Spaces" that support your efforts at growth and healing.

As a home environmental inspector, I am well aware that it can be overwhelming for people to take stock of all the changes that are necessary to make in our modern buildings to recreate a more natural climate for health and well-being. I strongly recommend that the first room to start making changes within our homes is the bedroom. Creating a sanctuary here will have the most immediate and profound benefits to your health.

### Decreasing The Positives

To improve the ion balance in a home the first area that we need to look at is decreasing the materials and conditions that generate the excessive positive ions. It does little good to leave conditions as they are and simply install a negative ion generator to counteract the positive ions. This may work in a very small confined space but it will not have much effect away from the immediate vicinity of the

--cont. on page 9



## A Chinook In Your Home--cont.

generator.

The best way is through the material and finish choices that we build and furnish our homes with. Many people these days are removing carpets and installing hardwood flooring to improve the IAQ. This is a wise move, but if you then cover the floor with a synthetic varnish you are not utilising the full benefits that wood has to offer and you are creating another positive ion generator. The alternative is to finish the floor with a natural beeswax-based product that still allows the wood to breathe, absorb toxins from the air, and balances the humidity levels in the home.

All natural fibre drop rugs, cotton bedding, and solid wood furnishings will not produce excessive positive ions. Covering the screen of a TV or computer monitor with a cotton material after use will stop the discharge of positive ions into the air. Maintaining the relative humidity in the building around 40% will also decrease the amount of charge that is given off by the synthetics already present.

### Increasing The Negatives

As usual, nature seems to be able to always provide the best answers to the problems that we create. Bringing nature's negative ion generators into our homes is easily done by using plants and moving water. Plants are not only a great way to filter the air but they also generate negative ions. Progressive corporate companies are now building large "living walls" that incorporate both moving water and plants to filter the air and increase the negative ions and oxygen content of the indoor air.

You can feel the difference yourself by sensing the micro climate around a fountain in a mlil setting. It's no wonder people linger there to recuperate during their shopping ventures into the severely positive ion environment of a modern shopping centre.

Increasing the amount of plants in your sanctuary and adding a small flowing fountain to your altar or special corner will also greatly improve the environmental conditions present. The many other benefits to bringing moving water and plants into your home can be researched in the excellent book by Denise Linn titled, "Sacred Space".

### How Many Negatives?

You cannot have too many negative ions in a building. An excess of negative air ions creates mental clarity, alertness, diminished bacteria and viruses in air, and increased growth in house plants.

That is why we feel so invigorated from being in a forest, walking along a beach, or sitting by a waterfall.

I am often asked about negative ion generators and their effects on the ion count in a building. In a small confined space such as a home office, a negative ion generator may make a difference. This does not hold true for a larger space such as a whole home. The small amount of negative ions generated are usually offset by the number of positive ions generated by air movement and friction across synthetic surfaces. An ioniser will also produce small amounts of ozone that some people are intolerant to even at extremely low levels. Mechanical counter-solutions can be viewed as treating the symptoms and are never as effective as treating the actual underlying cause.

*Paul Battle is a certified Bau-Biologie Environmental Inspector. He specialises in the detection of home health hazards relating to IAQ, EMF's, lighting, and geopathic stress. He is available for personal consultations and can be reached at Your Health - Your Home (613) 820-5716<>*

### Health Problems In Your Home?



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# CONTAINER GARDENING

Planting in containers is a great way to brighten a balcony, patio, or deck.

With a little imagination and creative use of plants, pots or urns, even the most confined space can be transformed into a tranquil refuge.

Some planning and consideration are required for good results.

What are you trying to achieve with your container plantings? Do you want to brighten up a space, highlight a feature, or cover up something ugly like a dividing fence or wall? Do you want tall plants, small plants or vines?

The same rules apply for container gardening as for regular planting: temperature, light, water, and soil requirements of individual plants must be met to ensure success.

Is the area where you will put the containers bright and sunny? Dark and shady? Some sun, some shade?

Fortunately, many hardy, colorful annuals are suitable for container planting, and have similar requirements. Greenhouses often identify and group "shade" plants and "sun-loving" plants to make selection easier.

What containers will look best? Do you want uniformity or a mixture of shapes and sizes to accommodate large single plants or little pots of pansies? Can something be recycled as an unusual container?

Good drainage is most important. Even with careful watering, a plant can become waterlogged and die in a container with no drain hole.

The planter should be deep and wide enough to easily accommodate the plants intended for it, leaving an inch of free space above the soil at the top to prevent splashing when watering. Put an inch of pebbles in the bottom of the planter. Add soil. For mixed plantings, set the tallest plants toward the center or rear. Allow space for plants to grow. Mulch applied as a final touch will retain moisture. To protect plants from midday heat, avoid metal containers, ensure some air

circulation, and water in the morning. White containers, which reflect heat, are best for hot locations.

For the environmentally sensitive, choosing a planting medium can be a challenge. If you have never gardened, before purchasing materials it may be a good idea to walk through a greenhouse to see if you can tolerate the chemical-filled soil mixes. If this does not bother you, buying the right amount of a reliable planting medium will be easy. As I cannot tolerate any of the prepared mixes, I use a mixture of compost (or black earth), topsoil, peat and a little sand. These are available in reasonably small bags. This approach requires a little more work, but ensures there will be no sour, chemical smell. This mixture also seems less mouldy than commercial mixes.

Organic fertilizers are generally preferable to chemical fertilizers, but are difficult to add later to planted containers, are slow-release and may not provide enough nutrients for crowded plantings. Powdered fertilizers, like RX 15, are easily mixed with water and applied, do not burn foliage, have no chemical odor, are highly effective, and inexpensive.

Roses are an example of sun loving plants adaptable to container growing. Miniature roses can be grown in small pots 5-8" across and deep, or in hanging baskets. Floribundas, polyanthas, hybrids and short hybrid teas require containers at least 20" across and deep. To plant, provide a 2" layer of broken crockery or pebbles in the bottom, then a thin layer of peat moss, then a layer of compost, a handful of bonemeal, and more compost. Place the rose in the centre of the container and spread the roots over a slight mound of compost. Fill with compost and firm around the plant, with the bud union slightly exposed. Fertilize when new growth is evident.

Container roses may be over-wintered in a cool basement. Keep barely moist during the dormancy period, and do not fertilize.

Houseplants can be put out for the summer if



--cont. on page 11

## Healthy Lawn Challenge

Keeping a healthy, beautiful lawn can be a challenge especially when you have chosen not to use pesticides. Here are some tips to help you maintain a pesticide-free lawn.

### Mow Your Lawn

When mowing your lawn, cut it only as often as is required to maintain a height of 6-7.5 centimetres (2.5 - 3 inches)--that's to avoid giving the plant a shock. In the summer, don't mow too often--let the grass grow taller. Taller grass shades and cools the soil and prevents sunlight from reaching and germinating weed seed. Leave the clippings on the lawn, or compost them

### Water Your Lawn

Consider the type of soil you have. You may be wasting water by applying too much, or too quickly, for the type of soil you have. (Clay soils will hold a lot of water, but they absorb water slowly. Sandy soils won't hold a lot of water, but they will absorb it quickly.)

Water your lawn regularly but not often--every three to five days. When you do water, do a thorough soaking. An hour-long soaking will penetrate better and encourage the grass to send down deep roots.

Water in the mornings--avoid mid-day watering (when water evaporates) and evening watering (which encourages fungi and other disease). Don't water frequently and lightly--this will only encourage weeds to grow.

### Dethatch, Aerate and Fertilize

Thatch is a layer of organic matter which develops between the soil and vegetation; it's made of living and dead stems, roots and leaves. A thin layer of thatch helps your lawn resist weeds, drought and disease, but if your site doesn't drain well, you could end up with a thick accumulation of thatch. Too much thatch means that less water will reach your soil, your grass will root shallowly in the thatch, and fertilizer and pesticides will accumulate in the thatch instead of reaching their intended destinations.

--cont. on page 12

*Ask not what AEHA can do for you.*

*Ask what you can do for yourself by working with other members.*

### Container gardening--cont.

you first expose them to natural light for short periods to prevent sunburn and respect their light requirements. Ferns, for example, should always be in shade.

Happy gardening!

By Anne McCallum

*Editor's note:* There's still time to take advantage of creating and extending your personal bit of summer by container planting. Bargains abound at local garden centres, particularly the seasonal centres set up at places such as the grocery.

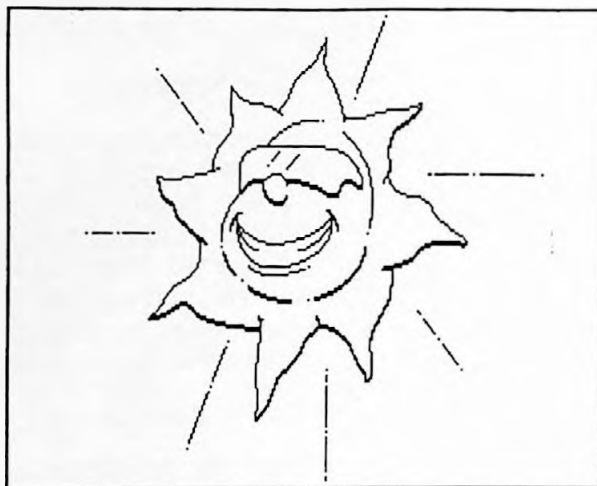
As a child, we grew vegetables in containers, creating a supply of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, lettuce, and squash. By using trellises, we had a beautiful refuge on our balcony, with the benefit of fresh veggies!

## Healthy Lawn Challenge--cont.

The best way to avoid thatch--or get rid of it--is to aerate the soil. Let earthworms do the work for you. In spring, topdress the lawn with top soil or peat moss--anything rich in organic matter. Just cover the lawn with a thin layer of this soil.

You can de-thatch mechanically simply by using a good stiff wire rake, or better yet, use a rake which has wide curved tines, like an oversized fork. Rent a verticutter or vertimower for heavy thatch.

Aerating the soil is just what it sound like--twice a year, you should give your lawn some air. Aeration allows oxygen and nutrients to penetrate the soil and water to drain better. Aerate when the soil is relatively dry.



## Fertilize

It's important to fertilize correctly by using the right fertilizers in the required proportions at the correct frequency. Don't fertilize unnecessarily. Most commercial fertilizers are a nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium combination, which is described on the package as a numerical mix.

Nutrients from organic sources: Nitrogen- Canola seed meal, fish meal, blood meal, hoof and horn meal. Phosphorus- Bone meal, single super phosphate from Israel or North Africa. Potassium- Kelp meal, liquid seaweed, wood ashes. Garden centres also sell organic mixes of other minor soil nutrients including iron, sulphur, calcium and magnesium.

You can make your own fertilizer by composting your kitchen scraps and yard waste. Compost can be dug into the ground, used as mulch, or used as topdressing on your lawn.

## Dealing with Common Lawn Weeds

Some plants that were once considered flowers, or otherwise desirable plants are now categorized as "weeds" by the manicured-lawn set--clover, dandelions, wildflowers, and groundcovers are among them.

Weeds usually spring up where grass can't grow or grows weakly, due to poor soil, drought, poor

fertilization, heavy mowing, and heavy traffic.

Chickweed: Hand-pull or cut as much as you can. Rake up the stems to avoid re-establishing the plant. Don't water often, but when you do, water heavily. Increase soil pH by adding lime.

Dandelions and Plantain: Dig plants out completely when they are in bloom (at their weakest), using a weed popper. Mow and remove clippings when seedheads are present. Increase soil pH.

Thistle: Dig them out with a weed popper or spud, removing as much as you can (thistle roots are "runners" that can extend more than 25 feet.) Fill in the hole with topsoil. Sprinkle the area with lawnseed.

Crabgrass and Annual Bluegrass: High mowing will eventually reduce your "crabgrass quotient" to zero, but it takes several years. Meanwhile, fertilize in the spring to get your lawn off to a good start. Shade crabgrass and bluegrass by covering the lawn with black mulching paper or black plastic for up to 10 days--your lawn will wither too, but it will recover.

Clover: Pull or cut it in the spring. Make sure soil phosphorus is kept low. Thick, well-fertilized grass will keep it from re-emerging.

## Lawns and Disease

Most lawn diseases are the result of unhealthy grass arising from poor soil, poor drainage, or too much thatch. If you're looking after your lawn properly--watering and mowing correctly, dethatching and aerating as needed, disease likely won't be a problem. However, here a few common diseases and how to control them:

Snow mold: You'll see it as soon as the snow melts, as circular coloured pink, grey, brown patches matted with mold. To avoid the problem in areas with a history of mold, fertilize, cut the grass to the right height and keep thatch to a minimum.

Fairy ring: Soils without enough moisture and of poor fertility often suffer from fairy ring. Initially, you'll see a circle of dark green, fast-growing grass

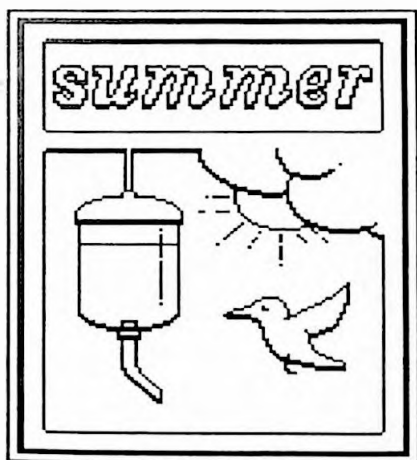
--cont. on page 13

## Does Your Car Air Conditioning Smell Musty?

Car air conditioners(A/C) can make hot summer driving much more comfortable, but a system that is not running properly can be a source of problems for some people. The biggest area of concern is a build up of mould on the evaporator. (When the A/C is turned on, you may notice a musty smell.) The evaporator absorbs heat and traps moisture from the warm air as it blows through the evaporator. The moisture collects in a drip pan then discharges through drainage tubes. The drip pan and tubes can become blocked by dead leaves or other debris that find their way into the system. This scenario provides an opportune environment for mould to grow--then be blown throughout your car for you to inhale when you turn the A/C on.

The drip pan and discharge tubes can be easily cleaned by a qualified air conditioning technician. However, do your homework and inquire how the system will be cleaned. Some repair shops will use an anti-bacterial spray to kill the mould. The sprays may not be tolerated by sensitive people.

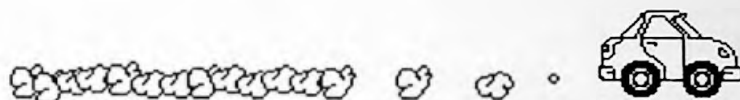
Other maintenance suggestions include fixing leaks in the system, keeping the refrigerant "topped up", and replacing the drive belt to the compressor when it becomes worn. An A/C check-up, excluding any repairs, runs about \$40, but could make a big difference in whether the system keeps working for you. <>



## Car Indoor Air Filters

It is becoming easier to purchase new vehicles that have factory-installed air filters. The filters for the heating and ventilation system reduce dust, pollen, and other irritants. A recent article in *The Edmonton Journal* reported that Chrysler Corp. also has an accessory air filter that can be installed in their 1996 and 1997 minivans. The part, plus installation, costs around \$100. It is recommended that the filter be changed every two years or 40,000 km.

If you are shopping for a car, it may be worth asking whether the model can be factory-equipped with one of these filters. If you already have a car, manufacturers may be able to install an accessory filter. Either way, indoor air filtration in vehicles is becoming an affordable option. <>



## Healthy Lawn Challenge--cont.

and later, you'll see alternating inner bands of dead and green grass. In late summer, if it's wet, you'll also see mushrooms. There's no easy cure--one way is to cultivate the whole area in order to mix uninfested soil with the infested parts.

**Powdery mildew:** The popular Kentucky bluegrass is affected by this fungus, especially in shady, protected areas. It appears as small patches of white and light grey fungal growth on the grass blades, which look as if they have dust on them, turning from yellow to brown as they weaken--though they don't die, they're susceptible to other diseases and to pests. The solution is to reduce shade, or use shade-tolerant grass, improve air drainage and be sure the grass has plenty of nutrients and water.

The above information was taken from Volume 2 *Environmental Living: Protecting The Environment ... In Your Yard and Garden* from the Ministry of Environment And Energy of Ontario. Most of the article was reprinted from Positive Reaction, Spring/Summer 1996, The Environmental Hypersensitivity Association of Ontario, Toronto.<>

# Branch News

## ORGANIC FOOD

**MOVING THE FREEZER SALE!!!**  
10% off all meat in the freezer in July!!!

The McCoys are moving. Great deals on chemical-free meat available. **CALL TODAY!!**

**MOOSE:** \$2.25/lb (reg. \$2.50) hamburger/stew  
\$3.15/lb (reg. \$3.50) medium cuts  
\$4.05/lb (reg. \$4.50) premium cuts

**DEER:** \$2.70/lb (reg. \$3.00) hamburger  
\$3.60/lb (reg. \$4.00) medium cuts  
\$4.50/lb (reg. \$5.00) premium cuts

### CHICKENS

(organic, average 8 lbs each):  
\$2.47/lb (reg. 2.75)

Call Mel or Carolyn McCoy for a pick-up appointment,  
825-0279

**!! HOME NEEDED FOR THE MEAT FREEZER !!**  
**THE MCCOYS CAN'T HAVE IT IN THEIR NEW**  
**LOCATION.** Call Stephane, 819 648-5864, right  
away if you have a spot.

## MEMBERSHIP

Hello everyone! Now that my term as membership chair has ended, I would like to share a few thoughts about the importance of the membership function in any organization and provide you with some guidelines for our organization in particular.

Organizations, especially self-help organizations like ours, are member-based. Our primary purpose is to share information among ourselves. In that context, membership is a frontline job. Often the first contact potential members have with the organization is through the membership chair, who is also responsible for ensuring membership is maintained.

**Committee work is fun!** Have you ever noticed how a chore like painting can turn into a party when performed in company? At the branch level, membership work involves the following: picking up membership mail at the mailbox every week or two; logging incoming mail to keep a paper trail; creating and updating records in the database and keeping backups of the information stored in the branch's computer; sending membership cards and thank you letters; producing membership lists every three months

or so and distributing them on a need-to-know basis (our list is confidential); sending lists of new members to the telephone tree chair and lists of donators to the *Eco-Sense* editor; writing and mailing out monthly reports; answering telephone and mail inquiries, responding to feedback from local and national treasurers or national membership chair; updating form letters and information on new members; info sheets, as required; buying supplies, photocopying lists, reports, forms, reminder inserts and submitting receipts to the branch treasurer for refund; generating and printing labels for *Eco-Sense* distribution and special mailings; identifying the labels of members whose memberships have lapsed or are about to lapse so that reminders be inserted in the newsletter; sending personal reminder letters to those who still have not renewed; attending board meetings and performing other related duties.

As you can see, membership is central to the operation of the organization. To ensure the processing of your membership goes smoothly, please follow these guidelines.

- Send your applications or renewals directly to:  
AEHA Ottawa Branch-Membership  
RPO Shopp/West Box 33023  
Nepean, Ontario, K2C 3Y9
- The dues are still \$25.
- Make your cheque payable to AEHA Ottawa Branch.
- If not inconvenient, write a separate cheque for donations. (Receipts are issued by AEHA National.)
- Check your membership card to know when to renew. The year and month (ex. 9709) of membership expiry also appears in the top right corner of your address label on every issue of *Eco-Sense* and *Update*.

Since May, 1994, I have had the opportunity to exchange correspondence with our members on a number of occasions and to put a face to a few names at the June Conference. I wish all of you the best of luck on the road to recovery and the strength to share as much as you can with like-minded people. Godspeed. Johanne Falardeau <>

*Note:* Thanks from everyone at the Ottawa Branch, Johanne for your wonderful work!! We'll miss you in this important role. Anyone interested in helping with membership as a committee member or the chairperson can call 860-AEHA.



## CLASSIFIEDS

### • CLASSIC SOLO CANOEING

Two lessons totalling four hours instructed by Becky Mason at Meech Lake. Basic or Advanced. All equipment provided. Fee \$65. Contact Becky Mason, (819) 827-4159, Box 126, RR#1, Chelsea, Quebec, J0X 1N0, email redcanoe@istar.ca

• ALLERMED Martinaire VH300 air Cleaner. Stainless steel case (12"x12"x23"high), three filter system, on castors for easy moving. Hardly used with extra filters, \$250. Call Carolyn McCoy, 825-0279 or 225-6671.

## TIDBITS

• Elizabeth Hare now reports, "I have now tried the Parker Clean Aqua Clean process and tolerated it quite well. Noticed no smell at all. I had a dress and a winter coat cleaned and could wear them right away. Granted, I'm not as sensitive as a lot of people!"

• L'Ami Des Gourmets (Delicatessen) is making 100% rye, sourdough pita bread. This pita is almost indistinguishable from white wheat in appearance . and may be what some of you who wish to add a variety of whole grains to your diet are looking for. It is reasonably priced (maybe even less than you'd pay for run-of-the-mill pita bread.) The address is 2579 Edinburgh Place, off Innis Rd. The phone number is 749-9899. (Ask for John or Chris.)

• Two notes from Tatiana Schneider regarding last edition of the *Source Book*:

p.20 under Baked goods can be added BREAD & ROSES BAKERY,

11 Beechwood Ave, tel. 745-2087

Specializing in great organic breads: rye, spelt, yeastfree, pita

p.34 Under Mother Hubbard

Rachel Perry products are HEAVILY scented...and should not be advised to people with MCS.

• Directory of individuals' email addresses

Being able to contact others with sensitivities can be very helpful. Anyone who would like to make their

email address available in *Eco-Sense* can send the info to the *Eco-Sense* editor (address on page 1). Please state what type of contact you'd be willing to be--support while healing, health questions, advocacy, general. When space allows, we'll include the directory in *Eco-Sense*.

• The following might be interesting to you:

Has anyone an idea about a non-outgassing mousepad?

When I asked this question of an MCS list, the best response I got was to sacrifice the back of an old hardback book. It does work well.

Chris Brown

## HELP WANTED

• Membership chair person and helpers. See Johanne's comments in the membership column.

• Someone to plan and arrange workshops--think up interesting topics, contact interesting people ...Call 860-AEHA.

## FUNDRAISING

The word is out--this is the book you need!

*Source Book for Persons with Environmental Sensitivities.*

members	\$6
non-members	\$7

Buy your copy at the next AEHA Ottawa Branch meeting or send a cheque with your request to Lynn Cicutti, 14 Wildbriar Way, Nepean, ON K2G 5B4.

### Other hot sellers:

"Clean Air has NO Scent"

T-shirts	\$20
posters	\$ 2
buttons	\$ 2

All items are available at our meetings. Help spread the word that we don't tolerate scents!

AEHA student Kit \$15.00

# Dates to Remember

## Meetings

AEHA Ottawa meetings are held at the McNabb Community Centre, 180 Percy Street (1 block north of Gladstone and 1 block east of Bronson), in Ottawa, at 7:30 p.m.

**Call 860-AEHA for the latest information on meetings or workshops.**

### JULY

**POTLUCK SUPPER--July 26**  
at Anne and George Buckingham's.

Please bring a dish of food to share (well-labelled,) a serving utensil, your plate, glass and utensils, and your appetite!

5:30 p.m., Saturday, July 26 at 25 Costello Ave., Nepean, at Anne and George Buckingham's.

**No meeting in July.  
No workshop in July**

### AUGUST

**No meeting in August**

**Summer Wild Plant Food Foraging--August 9**  
**with renowned expert and long-time AEHA**  
**member, Martha Webber.**

Come for a day of identifying the nutritious, wild plants available for the picking in mid-summer, and enjoy taste-sampling at the end! This is the opportunity to benefit from Martha's depth of knowledge that many of us have been waiting for for years!

Directions to Webber residence:  
Exit Queensway at Eagleson/March Rd. exit. Follow March Rd. for 15 -20 minutes. Turn right on Dunrobin Rd. and go about 1 1/4 miles. Martha's house is on the left, 1913 Dunrobin Rd. It will have Webber on the mailbox. It is easy to miss, so watch carefully.

1-4 p.m., Saturday, August 9th, at the Webber residence in Dunrobin.

Call the hotline--860-AEHA

## Workshops

Registration: \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members. Make out your cheque to "AEHA Ottawa" and send to WORKSHOPS, Nepean RPO Shopp/City West, Box 33023, Nepean, ON, K2C 3Y9, at least one week before the event, or call (613) 860-AEHA, and a volunteer will call you back within a few days.

### SEPTEMBER

**Fall Wild Plant Food Foraging--September 13**  
**with Martha Webber**

Learn to identify nutritious fall wilds and try them out with Martha's guidance. An opportunity not to be missed!

Directions to Webber residence:  
Exit Queensway at Eagleson/March Rd. exit. Follow March Rd. for 15 -20 minutes. Turn right on Dunrobin Rd. and go about 1 1/4 miles. Martha's house is on the left, 1913 Dunrobin Rd. It will have Webber on the mailbox. It is easy to miss, so watch carefully.

1- 4 p.m., Saturday, September 13th at the Webber residence in Dunrobin.

**September meeting--September 18**  
7:30 p.m., McNabb Community Centre

Come to our first meeting of the fall. Topic to be announced. Check the hotline for updated information--860-AEHA.

*J Falardeau  
6267 Castille Court  
Orleans Ont K1C 1X4*

Call the hotline--860-AEHA.